

[8th August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) if so, from which date and whether it is daily; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Indian Airlines has commenced operation of thrice weekly A-320 service on Delhi- Bhubaneshwar-Delhi route with effect from 15th July, 2000. Due to non-availability of spare A-320 aircraft capacity, it is not possible to provide a daily A-320 service on Delhi-Bhubaneshwar-Delhi route at present.

Airports near residential areas

†1720. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to construct those airports which are situated near residential areas in the far away places in view of the air crash occurred near Patna Airport;

(b) if so, the number of such airports togetherwith the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In case of many old airports, residential areas have developed nearby over a long period. However, necessary rules relating height restriction etc. are enforced in giving 'No objection' to such development so that safety of civil aviation operations is ensured. As such, there is no danger to civil aviation operations in such airports. Therefore, there is no plan to shift such existing airports to far away places.

Investment in Air India by foreign airlines

†1721. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign airlines have been allowed to invest in Air India;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the conditions laid down for making investment in Air India togetherwith the routes in respect of which such permission has been given?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) The Government has approved in principle, bringing down the equity of the Government of India in Air India to 40% through a process of disinvestment by sale of 40% of equity to a strategic partner, upto 10% to employees and the balance by sale to financial institutions and/or on the share market. In the event of the strategic partner being a joint venture with an element of foreign holding, which can be of a foreign airlines also, the arrangement should be such as would limit foreign holding in Air India to a maximum of 26% of the total equity.

Bhopal Airport as an International Airport

1722. **SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:**

SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that seven domestic airports were declared as International Airports recently but Bhopal Airport was not included in the list despite being most Centrally located airport in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government will review its decision and grant International Airport status to Bhopal Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The seven domestic airports which have facilities for operation of Medium Capacity Long Range (MCLR) and Small Capacity Long Range (SCLR) aircraft and also international traffic potential have recently been declared as international airports.

(c) The Government has no proposal, at present, to declare Bhopal as an international airport.

Expansion of Crisis Management Group

1723. **SHRI SURESH KALMADI:**

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state: